

for countless federal programs to spur community development projects in his community, and he has been instrumental in working with local government and the various federal departments and agencies to improve the quality of life for Georgians.

As the Planning Director for the Middle Flint Area Planning and Development Corporation and the River Valley Regional Commission, Gerald Mixon has become a vital resource to the dozens of local government officials and non-profit institutions that fall within his reach. His deep knowledge and experience of the grant-writing process and bottom-up community development has positioned him to serve as an essential lifeline for these community leaders who often seek technical assistance and sound advice as they work to improve their communities and neighborhoods. His service in this regard served the community tremendously as local officials are often tasked with working together to implement region-wide projects under the Community Development Block Grant, including in transportation and infrastructure, housing, and anti-poverty programs.

Gerald has built an impressive career in his lifetime, planning and overseeing the successful completion of countless community development projects, including leading the efforts to implement numerous comprehensive plans for efficient and sustainable solid waste management in the Middle Flint and River Valley Regions. Amid frequent destructive tornadoes, hurricanes, and other severe weather-related incidents, Gerald authored eight pre-disaster plans for counties and cities across the region to help mitigate damage and the need for costly repairs following disasters. And he modernized his region's public safety apparatus by conceptualizing and organizing a seven-county Enhanced 911 center covering the largest service area in Georgia that went on to become the Middle Flint E-911 system, which is still in operation today.

Gerald has accomplished much throughout his life, but none of this would have been possible without the Grace of God and the love and support of his wife, Diane, and his three children, Heather, Stuart and David.

Sir Winston Churchill often said: "You make your living by what you get; you make your life by what you give." The Middle and Southwest Georgia region is a better place today because Gerald Mixon gave so much to so many for so long to make our communities stronger, better place to live. As a man of tremendous work ethic, organizational talent, vision, and tact, his life's work has helped create prosperity and opportunities in Georgia that many may have once not thought possible.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues in the House of Representatives to join my wife, Vivian, and me, along with the more than 765,000 people of Georgia's Second Congressional District, in extending our sincerest appreciation and best wishes to Gerald Mixon upon the occasion of his retirement from an outstanding career of service to his beloved community.

HONORING THE GROUNDBREAKING CAREER AND CONTRIBUTIONS OF CARRIE OWENS

HON. ELISSA SLOTKIN

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 27, 2023

Ms. SLOTKIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of an extraordinary educator who shaped the lives of thousands of mid-Michigan students during her groundbreaking career.

Carrie Owens grew up in Florida during the time of segregation and high racial tensions, and she knew from an early age she wanted to work toward dismantling the systems she saw all around her. Though her parents had no formal education, they pushed their kids to have what they had not, and a young Carrie thrived in school. She eventually became a teacher and was hired by Okemos Public Schools in 1964, becoming the first Black teacher in the district.

It's said that when Mrs. Owens first interviewed for a job at Cornell Elementary School in Okemos, she vowed to help each student individually, because she recognized what many even in education circles did not yet grasp—that all students learn at different paces and in different ways. Just as she thrived in school, Owens did everything to ensure her students did the same, and she was put in charge of a transitional class of elementary students, who up until that point had had limited success in school. Owens made sure each of her students progressed to grade level, and empowered them to understand how they learned.

Word of her tireless dedication to student success and her innovative teaching philosophy spread quickly, and many families moved to Okemos just so their children could be in her class.

By the time she retired from teaching in 2001, she had touched thousands of young lives and helped change the face of education in the community. Not only did her hiring pave the way for other teachers of color, by the end of career Okemos had its first Black superintendent, and the district was overall a more diverse, inclusive community.

As we mark Black History Month, I salute Carrie Owens, who is Black history in Okemos. This trailblazing teacher has left her mark on the hearts and minds of the entire community, and we are so much better for her service. May her lessons live on in all the students she touched, and in all the lives she changed.

HONORING YING LEE

HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 27, 2023

Ms. LEE of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the extraordinary life of my dear friend and first legislative director, Ying Lee, and her incredible contributions to her community and our country. I want to extend my deepest condolences to Ying's children, Sarah and Max, her grandchildren, Max Jr. Kelley, and Olivia, and Ying's entire extended family. They are all in my prayers during this difficult time.

Ms. Lee's story is one of tremendous perseverance, resilience, and fortitude in the face of struggle. Born in China, Ms. Lee arrived in the United States as a refugee from Shanghai during World War II. Her life before immigrating was marked with hardship, as Ms. Lee faced firsthand the brutal realities that stem from war and militarization. By the young age of 13, Ms. Lee had survived more than most people do in a lifetime, witnessing poverty, famine, and sickness, all brought on by devastating warfare. Her experiences in childhood were fundamental in shaping Ms. Lee's identity as an activist, educator, city councilmember, and anti-war movement icon.

Her family's escape from an invading Japanese army brought Ms. Lee to the Bay Area. Settling in Berkeley, Ms. Lee spent most of her fighting for progress, peace, and equity, as a councilmember and as my legislative director. Her journey in political activism began in the halls of UC Berkeley, where Ms. Lee studied political science, earning her bachelor's and master's degrees. There, she became involved in the civil rights movement, fighting for racial justice; and the anti-war movement, calling for an end to the Vietnam war.

Ms. Lee's commitment to serving the greater good began with her career as a teacher at Berkeley High School, where she spent years educating young minds. In 1973, Ms. Lee made history as Berkeley's first Asian American council member and helped shape the city's ongoing legacy as a haven for progressive politics. She continued her journey in public service as a Congressional aide for Congressman Ron Dellums and, later, for myself, as my first Legislative Director when I came to Congress. Here in D.C., Ms. Lee spent years by my side advocating for equity, global peace, and legislative change. Together, we worked to advance global peace and security on many fronts, including our visit to Japan to discuss the consequences of war in the aftermath of the September 11 attacks. Ms. Lee's work to advance equity measures included her contributions to the Living Wage, Jobs For All Act, which sought to codify basic economic rights for all Americans and improve the quality of life.

Ying Lee was a tireless warrior, as her activism never ceased. In 2020, Ms. Lee joined historic crowds of people to fight for Black Lives, marching in the streets of Berkeley with her "Black Lives Matter" sign. At 83, she protested the closure of Berkeley's post office, handing out pamphlets and participating in rallies. Ms. Lee exemplified a true public servant, an advocate, and fierce warrior for justice.

I spoke with Ying two weeks before her passing. She sounded strong and energetic. As always, she encouraged me to keep fighting the good fight. While I will always remember our last conversation with a heavy heart, I will meet our challenges head on with Ying's fervor and passion, in her honor.

While we mourn her loss, we celebrate her remarkable life, which will be remembered as one of love, passion, compassion, dedication, and brilliance. Her legacy will provide us guidance in rising to the occasion as we continue her fight for peace and justice. I loved Ying and will miss her tremendously. May she Rest in Peace and Power.